Dear Jeep Corp.,

In 1983 I purshased a new 1983 Teep Cherokee from Cross Country Motors in Wilson N ( ) have been extremely satisfied with the vehicle, and with the people at Cross Country Motors They have been real nice.

They have been real nice. On Monday Oct 13, 986 my charakse caught on pour the motor had recently started blowing or out around the veloce cover gasket a local mechanic said the motor (a 6 cyl) had developed base compression and this was forcing the oil out around the value cover Distres Om Monday I was taking my Cherokee: To this mechanics house to get it worked on, and I saw two friends fishing on the side of the road so I stopped to talk to them One of my friends so saw the truck start smoking while we talked and said he would dip up a bucket full of water god to raise my hood so I ran to

The Cherokee and pulled on the hood latch and it would not budge I pulled harder until finally the latch handle broke in my hand hand. To the fire kept getting worse and we could not get to it under the hood to put it out. We that threw buckets of water into the front grille, and on the hood, and up the the fender wells, and up under the truck as best as we could to try and get water to the fire because the hood latch was stuck of one of my arendo had left to be finder fire entinguisher He returned with the fire extinguisher and an axe. Using the axe and my tire tool in my Cherokee we so pryed The hood open and finally put out the fire There was considerable damage The reason of an writing to tell you this, is because I think there is a problem were un-the bood cable is routed from a latter handle in the truck to there is a problem with the way The fact hardle in the truck to

to write and tell you about this, so at maybe the next fellow can be speed a little greek Thank you for reading this letter Som Munay



#### TELECOMMUNICATIONS SENDING BLANK

To AMC Operator: Please send the message below subject to AMC policy:

DOMESTIC
DOMESTIC

MX1 AMC Teletype System ( ) Domestic Telex: -

( ) Domestic TWX; # ( ) Domestic Telegram

( ) Mailgram (Overnight Service)

INTERNATIONAL

International Telex: # \_\_ ( ) International Telegram:

( ) FR = Ful Rate ( ) LT = Overnight Service

Department Charci Number ( 2143

Time Filed:

\_\_\_\_ Date: 3/6/84

Firm-Name/Cable Code: Street Address: City/State/Country:

DARRELL LONG - DALLAS ZONE COPIES:

REGARDING YOUR TELEPHONE REPORT THAT OWNER IRA LOFTIN OF ICCF87F4FT029744. DELIVERY CANYON, TEXAS 1984 CJ-7 DATE OF FIRE WEEK OF 2/20/84. DATE 11/24/83, MILEAGE ALL FIRE DAMAGE IN ENGI. AREA SEEMS TO BE RELATED TO SEVERE ENGINE OIL LEAK AT RINR OF ENGINE DISCOVERED BY YOUR INSPECTION. DAMAGE CONFINED TO ENGINE COMPARTMENT AND ADJACENT SHEET METAL. WE CONCUR WIT: YOUR PLAN TO ASSUME RESPONSIBILITY FOR DAMAGE ESTIMATED AT \$4,033.

Marin acen HARRY ALLEN OWNER SERVICES /pec

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### CERTIFIED MAIL RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

Mr. Donald Weir LTV Missiles and Electronics Group AM General Division P.O. Box 3330 Livonia. MI 48151-3330 NEF--123rtr EA88--009

Dear Mr. Weir:

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) conducts investigations of potential safety defects in motor vehicles and equipment. This function is performed under the authority of Sections 112 and 152 of the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act (the Act), which provides for safety defect notification and recall campaigns by manufacturers to reduce accidents. Injuries, and deaths.

This office is currently investigating, under action EA88-009, engine compartment fires in 1980 through 1985 AMC vehicles equipped with non-metallic valve covers and all engines produced by AMC between June 1. 1980 and June 1 1985, equipped with non-metallic valve covers. Information receives by this office indicates that AM General willized the AMC 258 CID six-cylinder engine in AM General's FJ-BC 1/2 Ton Delivery Van. For purposes of this information request, the following terms are defined unless otherwise described:

- Subject vehicles: all 1980 through 1986 AM General vehicles equipped with the AMC 258 CID engine.
- o <u>AM General</u>. all the personnel and files of the LTV Missiles and Electronics Group's AM General Division including all field personnel
- o Alleged defect: shall refer to engine compartment fires.



In order for my staff to evaluate the alleged defect, certain information is required. Pursuant to Sections 108 and 112 of the Act, please provide numbered responses to the following items. Please repeat each item verbatim before the response. If you cannot answer any specific question, please state the reason.

- 1 Furnish the total number of the subject vehicles AM General has sold in the United States by model, weight rating, and model year.
- 2. Furnish the number and copies of all owner complaints, field reports, service and technical builtetins, studies, analyses, surveys, or investigations from all sources, either received or authorized by AM General or of which AM General is aware, pertaining to the alleged defect. This should include any information pertaining to communications between AM General and AMC, Renault, Chrysler. or the ILS Postal Service.
- 3. Identify and describe all accidents, subrogation claims, or lawsuits known to AM General pertaining to the alleged defect (where AM General is or was a defendant or codefendant). Provide AM General's analysis of each item, clearly identifying the vehicle (model model year and VIN) the vehicle owner. and any injuries or property damage which may have occurred.
- Identify and describe all modifications or changes that could relate to the alleged defect in the subject vehicles. The following information must be included for each modification or change:
  - a. the reason for the modification or change:
  - a description of the modification or change;
  - c. the approximate calendar date on which the modification or change was incorporated into production; and
  - state whether the modified or changed components could be interchanged with earlier production components.
- Furnish the number of warranty claims related to the alleged defect on the subject vehicles by model; model year, calendar month, and problem code. Each problem claim code must be identified.
- 6. Provide the name, address, and telephone number of any and all fleets, companies, private individuals, etc., of which AM General is aware, which purchased, leased, obtained, etc. 20 or more of the subject vehicles. For each concern, furnish the number of vehicles broken down by model weight rating, and model year.
- Furnish AM General's assessment of the alleged defect in the subject vehicles.



It is important that AM General respond to this letter on time. This letter is being sent pursuant to Section 112 of the Act, which authorizes this agency to conduct any investigation which may be necessary to enforce Title I of the Act. Your failure to respond promptly and fully to this letter may be construed as a violation of Section 108(a)(1)(B) of the Act.

Your written response, in triplicate, referencing the identification codes in the upper right hand corner of page 1 of this letter. must be submitted to this office within 20 working days from your receipt of this letter. If you find that you cannot respond within the allotted time, with all the requested information, you must request an extension from the Director. Office of Defects Investigation, no later than 5 working days prior to the due date. A telephone request for an extension may be made to the Director at (202) 365-2850. but it must be confirmed in writing.

If any portion of your response is considered confidential information, include all such material in a separate enclosure marked confidential In addition, you must submit a copy of all such confidential material directly to the Chief Counsel of WHITS and comply with all other requirements of 49 CFR Part 512, Confidential Business Information.

If you have any technical questions concerning this matter. please contact Mr. Richard Reed of my staff at (202) 366-5212.

Sincerely,

Original signed by Michael B. Brothiso

Michael B. Brownlee, Director Office of Cefects Investigation Enforcement



CERTIFIED MAIL
RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

Mr. William R. Kittle Director, Vehicle Safety and Emissions Chrysler Corporation P.O. Box 1919 Detroit, MI 48288 NEF-123rtr EA88-009

Door Mr Kittle:

Non-metallic valve cover failures which allegedly result in engine compartment fires in certain 1880 through. 1885 American Motors vehicles have been under investigation by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) since November 1985. During that period, we have reviewed owner complaints, fire investigation, reports, technical publications concerning the design and performance of spails, and your reply to our inquiry. We have inspected subject vehicles are no engines, and interviewed several subject vehicle owners concerning the valve cover failure. We believe that the information now available indicates that the Intysier Notor Company (Chrysler) should initiate a voluntary recall of cartain 1981 through 1985 American Motors was cleen equipped with the 258 CID endine to correct the valve cover problem.

He are aware of at least 419 reports allegies value cover malfunction or failure. Of these, 70 reports indicated that the alleged value cover failure resulted in an engine compartment fire, while 141 reports indicate that an engine compartment fire occurred it their AMC six-cylinder engine without identifying the value cover as the source. Chrysler in its response of January 19, 1988, indicated having 71,779 warranty claims attributed to rocker cover leaks in 1981 through 1985 American Motors vehicles equipped with the 258 CID engine. Chrysler also presented parts sales data which indicated an across-the-board value cover replacement rate for all 1981 through 1985 258 CID engines of approximately 31 percent.

AMC's <u>ENGINE DEVELOPMENT REPORT</u> dated February 10, 1981 stated that production was experiencing a 20 percent oil leakage rate around the rocker covers. To correct this problem, the molding temperature for the valve cover was increased from 1409F to 2009F minimum. This reduced

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the maximum deflection at the rear of the cover from 0.0050 inches to 0.0030 inches. In addition, the cover was modified to include a 0.030 inch step. The report stated that this action would allow more sealant to be available to stretch with the cover after torquing. The failure rate then decreased from 20 nergent to less than 0.8 nergent.

In February 1982, "prompted by numerous reports of 6-cylinder rocker covers melting" AMC's Engine Development Group conducted tests to determine the cause of rocker arm :over melting. The test report stated that the problem occurred more frequently on 1982 model vehicles than on 1981 model vehicles, and "most of the covers were melted in the area of the center head bolt, along the cover flange, next to the exhaust manifold. The sting was performed using a special cylinder head and exhaust manifold. The stated conclusion was that "cover melting could only be achieved when engine was operated with low coolant." It was noted that "had the engine been operated under load, or subject to underhood temperatures, higher temperatures may have encountered much sooner.

Between June 1981 and Apr'l 1983, AMC issued three Technical Service Bulletins related to proper and improper valve cover sealing procedures.

Chrysler-ANC has introduced a modified non-metallic valve cover for vehicles equipped with ENe 25S CID engine at least four times: in February 1981. November 1984, and May 1986. The design change of November 1984 increased the "umber of fasteners attaching the valve cover to the cylinder head from two to seven. The two May 1986 changes included a change in material to reduce "warpage with the 1-6 cover at the flange between bolt holes," the addition of washers and metal inserts to the obit locations to eliminate torque loss while creating a 0.020 inch sealant gap, and the use of a pre-formed RTV instead of a formed-in-place gasket. These latest design changes appear to be in harmony with current engineering practices as discussed in SAE Papers 800526: Leteral Joint Movement Capability — The Key to Durable Formed-In-Place Gasketing and 860494: Effects of Engine Oils on Silicone Oil Seal Material.

Chrysler's January 19, 1988, response stated "Mith regard to the Fostal Service 1984 model year AM General vehicles equipped with the 4.2 liter. 6-cylinder engine, Chrysler offered to provide replacement valve cover kits for retrofit; of the entire fleet. AM General accepted our offer and contacted the Fostal Service to arrange details of the parts distribution and installation. This action should resolve the Postal Service's concern regarding valve cover leakage on these vehicles. Al' of the information which the Office of Defects Investigation has received to clearly indicates that the Postal Service's concern regarding valve cover

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leakage was with respect to engine compartment fires or the potential for fires. Chrysler's November 11 1987, report <u>CONTACT REPORT OF USPS</u> indicates that a Chrysler representative visited the Postal Service and that the purpose of the trip was to resolve the "Problem [of] engine compartment fires on U.S. Postal Service FJ-BC vehicles." The report states that "this item [oi] leak from valve cover igniting on exhaust manifold] accounted for 68 percent of the above total [fire incidents] very a manifold accounted for 68 percent or the above total [fire incidents] very [cover kit." Chrysler's decision to replace all of the valve covers on applicable Postal Service vehicles free of charge could be interpreted to be a "safety-related defect recall."

The information and reports received by this office demonstrate that there is a continuing risk of valve cover failure involving certain 1981 through 1985 model year AMC vehicles equipped with the ZSS CID engines and 1981 through 1985 AMC produced 258 CID engines. We request that you initiate a voluntary safety recall concerning this matter.

If Chrysler determines not to undertake the requested recall action, state the reasons for this decision in detail and furnish any additional analysis of the problem to this office. If Chrysler fails to provide substantive new information or fails to initiate a voluntary safety recall I may recommend that a formal defect investigation be opened. This includes issuing a press release describing the alleged defect and the Peasons for the investigation.

Our recommendation to conduct a safety recall does not reflect a formal conclusion by the agency with respect to the evidence. Also, our recommendation should not be confused with initial or final determinations of a safety defect pursuant to 15 U.S.C. 1412 or recall orders that are issued by the agency after a final determination of a safety defect.

Enclosed for your information are copies of 14 additional reports we have received.

It is important that you respond to this letter on time. This letter is being sent pursuant to Section 112 of the Act, which authorizes this agency to conduct any investigation which may be necessary to enforce Title I of the Act. Your failure to respond promptly and fully to this letter may be construed as a violation of Section 108(a)(1)(8) of the Act.

Your written response, in triplicate, referencing the identification codes in the upper right hand corner of page 1 of this letter. must be submitted to this office within 10 working days from your receipt of this letter. If you find that you cannot respond within the allotted time, with all the requested information, you must request an extension from the Director. Office of Defects Investigation, no later than 5 working days prior to the due date. A telephone request for an extension may be made to the Director at (202) 365-2850, but it must be confirmed in writing.

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If any portion of your response is considered confidential information, include all such material in a separate enclosure marked confidential. In addition, you must submit a copy of all such confidential material directly to the Chief Counsel of NHTSA and comply with all other requirements of 49 CFR Part 512, Confidential Business Information.

If you have any technical questions concerning this matter. please contact Mr. Richard Reed of my staff at (202) 366-4806.

Sincerely,

Original signed by Michael B. Brownies

Michael B. Brownlee, Director Office of Defects Investigation Enforcement

Enclosures:

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FOR AGENCY LISE ONLY ----DEEEBENICE NO DATE SECENCED VEHICLE OWNER'S OLICCTIONNAIDE MATRON DC ME EA-846-22 200277 OWNER INFORMATION TYPE OF BOINT TELEPHONE NO. (Area Corte) LAST NAME FIRST NAME & MIDDLE INITIAL BACKER Wat THERESA Home (516) 251- 1554 STREET ADDRESS CITY CTATE ZIP CODE WOODMERE DR MASTIC BEACH 11951 SIGNATURE OF OWNER 1-18-88 VEHICLE INFORMATION VEHICLE IDENTIFICATION NO. VEHICLE MAKE & MODEL MODEL YEAR LICICIE STAL SIGITION STORES 983 RENEGADE CATED AT BOTTOM OF WINDSHIELD ON DRIVER'S SIDE DATE OCT. ---peacer's NAME CITY. & STATE Patchogue Jeep Rt. 112 FNGINE SIZE = TURBO DATE DCT- 1983 (CID/CC/L) DIESEL VO CYLINDERS TO T/CAS E/NEW HSED Patchoque N.Y. 11772 FUEL INJECTED TRANSMISSION TYPE CRUISE POWER POWER BOOY STYLE MATCH BK C MANUAL STEFRING CONDITIONED CONTRO C 3 C 4 C 5 (Speed) E Yes D No 7 va 3/Yes Yes = No 208 FAILED COMPONENTISI/PARTISI INFORMATION (REPORT TIRE INFORMATION ON BACK) COMPONENT/PART NAME/S LOCATION FAILED PARTIS OBIGINAL Engine REPLACEMENT NO OF EASTINGS DATE(S) OF FAILURE(S) MANUEACTURER NHTSA PREVIOUS! MILEAGEIS) AT FAILUREIS CONTACTED NO CONTACTED VEHICLE SPEED AT FAILURE:S) Car was off APPLICABLE ACCIDENT INFORMATION ACCIDENT NUMBER REPSONS NUMBER OF FATALITIES DOODSOTY DAMAGE POLICÉ DEPORT CIDE INJURED ( 10.200-FILED R NO NYES INO C YES - NO NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION OF FAILUREIS), ACCIDENTIS), INJURYIESS ጵጵ On drove 1983 CJI Renegade from Dr. Woodmere mosti ommunity College EON BACK I NEEDED unusual

> The Proc. - Act of 1974 Public Law 13-579

This information is requested pursuant to authority vested in the National Highway Traffic Safety Act and subsequent amendments. You are under no obligation to reconstitute the subsequent amendments by the section and the MATSA. in determining whether a menufacturer should take appropriate action to correct a safety defect, if the NRTSA process with administrative enforcement or httpston against a manufacturer, your response, or a statistical summary thereof, may be used in support of the apency's action.

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STATE OF NEW YORK DEPARTMENT OF LAW ALBANY NY 19994

RECEIVED BES HAR 25 AF 8: 44

(518) 474-5481

CRACKEL KREISER [S. JATEL]
Assistant Attorney General in Charge
Albany Consumer Francis and Protection

ROBERT ABRAMS

March 21 1988

Mr. Brian P. Gallagher 35 Brookman Avenue Delmar NY 12054

Re: Jeep

Dear Consumer:

We are forwarding your complaint to the agency listed below. We believe this matter falls within their jurisdiction and they may be better able to assis: vou.

fer: truly ours.

OSCAR WAX. MEDIATOR BUREAU OF CONSUMER FRAUDS AND PROTECTION

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration cc. Department of Transportation 400 7th Street, S.W. Washington, DC 20590

SW 28

Return to:

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CONSUMER FRANCES & PROTECTION

SCARC CAPITOL
Albany, New York
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	POSTAGE WILL BE PAID BY NAT . HWY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMIN.	
	U.S. Department of Transportation National Highway Traffic Safety Advanistration	00430
<u> </u>	Office of Defects Investigations, NEF- 10 400 7th Street SW Washington, DC 20590	<b>*</b> 30
	Attn: JOANS Murianka	-
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## RECEIVED New York's 1988 FEB 25 M ID TAPITAL NEWSPAPERS

UNITED BEFECIS INVESTIGATION TIMES UNION KNICKERBOCKER NEWS

Philip W. Davis, Director Office of Defects Investigation Enforcement National Highway Traffic Safety Administration 400 7th St. SW Washington, D.C. 20590

Feb. 19- 1988

Dear Mr. Davis:

I am sending the enclosed article about the problems with AMC Jeeps to your attention. Thought you migh: be interested in this growing problem in our state.

Since I wrote the story. I have heard of some other Jeep fires in our area and hope to do a follow-up.

Sincerely,

Irene Gardner Keeney

Irene Gardner Keeney consumer editor 518-454-5478

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fires and forg introgation claims from insurance temponines (MI) ISA has received (Inf. complaints (Jahout engine compartments fires on AMC models with six-glinder engines; according to a spotesman Some, 600,000 AMC whiches from model years 1989 to 1985 are involved.

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# JCPenney Custom Decorating

## with a Jeep?

The Center for Auto Safety, 202

The Center for Anto Sarsy, and Trop. 2770.

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vans equipped with AMC air cylinder 258 CID engines. In February 1986, Robert K. St.

Francis, director of Office Fleet Man-agement for the U.S. Postal Service wrote NHTSA requesting it re-open its

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### New York's CAPITAL NEWSPAPERS

TIMES UNION KNICKERBOCKER NEWS

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration U.S. Department of Transportation Office of Defects Investigations 400 Seventh Street SW Washington: D.C. 20590 Attn: Philip W. Davis: Director

March 8: 1988

EA 88 407

Dear Mr. Davis:

I'm taking the liberty of sending you a follow up to the story I did about Jeep engine compartment fires. As you will seen there have been several in our area.

After this second story ran. I had a call from a consumer whose J-10: haif-ton pickup caught fire Oct. 5: 1987. He says a freend's 1985 Jeep Cherokee also caught fire while it was being driven and he's sending me the name of a man whose Jeep burned down his carport.

I've urged all of them to file complaints with NHTSA and our attorney general's office.

I plan to do another follow up and will let you know of any results from that  $\underline{\phantom{a}}$ 

Sincerely:

Irene Gardner Keeney consumer editor

consumer edito

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UTHCE DEFECTS INVESTIGATION

YEWS PLAZA - BOX 15000 - ALBANY, NEW YORK 12212 - PHONE (518) 454-5694

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STATE OF NEW YORK DEPARTMENT OF LAW ALBANY, NY 12224

(518) 474-5481

SELECT STATES THE STATES 1988 MAR 18 AM 9:

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March 11, 1988

ROBERT ARRAMS PETER BIENSTOCK

Edwin J. Robitaille RD 1, Box 187 Cohoes, NY 12047

RE: American Motors Sales Corp.

Dear Consumer:

We are forwarding your complaint to the agency listed below. We believe this matter falls within their jurisdiction and they may be better able to assist you.

Very truly yours,

DARREN BRESTIN, MEDIATOR BUREAU OF CONSUMER FRAUDS AND PROTECTION

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration / Department of Transportation 400 7th Street, S.W. Washington, DC 20590 cc:

SW 28

Section to:

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CONSTRUCT FRAUDS & PROTECTION
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Briefly describe your complaints My 1982 Concord Mas an
ill Gitting plastic valve Cover.
The times Union published a report whereas
many of these cars have been ruined by fire
Tasked the service manager what could be done
to prevent a possible fire.
He seemed to care less about this possibility
The only possible solution was to replace This
valve cover with another plastic cover
This replacement would be complicated due to the
fact the motor would have to be bared gov more
bolts.
This new cover would cost \$150
Being a retired senior citizen on a Limited
income why should I have to pay for a bad
valve cover the manufacturer was wrong in
Using these plastic covers.  **Dat form of relief ere you seeking? (e.g. exchange, repair, money pack, etc.)
Replacement with conventional metal part.
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Form Approved: O.M.B. No. FOR AGENCY USE ONLY AUTO SAFETY HOTLINE REFERENCE NO. DATE RECEIVED VEHICLE OWNER'S QUESTIONNAIRE NATION DC ME 309231 OWNER INFORMATION ITYPE OR PRINT FIRST NAME & MIDDLE INITIAL *Mobilides* STREET ADDRESS CITY STATE 11 a/\ SIGNATURE OF OWNER VEHICLE INFORMATION VEHICLE IDENTIFICATION NO. UNICONSTIEND TORISING CIMPER DEALER'S NAME CITY & STATE
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# LTV Missiles and Electronics Group

AM GENERAL DIVISION

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May 9, 1988

Mr. Michael B. Brownlee Director-Office of Defects Investigation Room #5326

U.S. Department of Transportation-NHTSA 400 Seventh Street S.W. Washington, D.C. 20590

Subject: Your investigation (Ref: NEF-123 rtr EA88-009) of Engine Compartment Fires in .980 through 1985 AWC Vehicles Equipped with Non-Metallic Valve Covers

Dear Mr. Brownlee:

This letter serves as confirmation of the telephone approval by a member of your staff, of a two (2) week extension for AM Generals response to your subject reference letter received on April 15, 1988. This would move the submittal date from May 13, 1988 to May 27, 1988. We thank you for your kind consideration and the extension.

Sincerely yours,

Smald J. Allihu

Donald P. Weiher Director-Product Assurance

DPW/tlc 0883t

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LTV Missiles and Electronics Group

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May 9, 1988

Michael B. Brownlee Director-Off to of Defects Investigation Room #5326 U.S. Department of Transportation-NHTSA 400 Seventh Street S.W. 48shingt. D.C. 20590

Subject: Your investigation (Ref. NEF- (23 rtr EA88-009) of Engine Compartment Fires in 1980 through 1985 AMC Vehicles Equipped with Non-Metallic Valve Covers

Dear Mr. Brownlee:

This letter serves as confirmation of the ilephone approval by a member of your staff, of a two week extension for AM Gunerals response to your subject reference ther received or April 15, 1988. its would now the about tall dat from May 1988 to May 77, 1988. We thank you for your kind nisideration and the extension.

sincerely yours,

conald P. Whiter

Director-Product Assurance

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### MAY 17 1588

Mr. Donald Weiher LTV Missiles and Electronics Group AM General Division 11900 Hubbard Drive P.O. Box 3330 Livonia, MI 48151-3330

NEF-12rfh EA88-009

Dear Mr. Weiher:

This responds to your letter of May 9, 1988, requesting an extension of time to provide the information requested in our letter of April 12, 1988, pertaining to £A88-009.

Based on the information you have provided, your request for an extension to May 27 1988, is granted. However, any available information should be sent as a partial submission as soon as possible.

Sincerely.

Onginal Michael B. Browns

Michael B. Brownlee, Director Office of Defects Investigation Enforcement



AM GENERAL DIVISION

3 25 FH 1: 30

Mr. Michael B. Brownlee Director - Office of Defects Investigation Enforcement National Highway Traffic Safety Administration 400 Seventh Street, S.W. Washington, D.C. 20590 May 27, 1°35

Reference: NEF-123rtr EA88-009

Dear Mr. Brownlee,

This letter responds to your letter of April 12, 1988 requesting information about engine compartment fires on our FUBC 1/2 Ton Delivery Van which utilized the AMC 258 CID 6-cylinder engine.

Information contained in our files pertaining to this subject has been

copied in triplicate and is provided by the attachments herewith.

In accordance with your instructions, we have responded to your questions and have repeated each item verbatim before our responses.

Furnish the total number of the subject vehicles AM General has sold in the United States by model, weight rating, and model year.

Total number of vehicles 5,645 Model - FUBC Wight rating - 1/2 Ton Model year - 1984 —

 Purnish the number and copies of all owner complaints, field reports, service and technical bulleting, studies, analyses, surveys, or investigations from all sources, either received or authorized by AM General or of which AM General is aware, pertaining to the alleged defect. This should include any information pertaining to communications between AM General and AMC, Renallt, Chrysler, or tre U.S. Postal Service.

There have been at least 95 recorded complaints made by the USPS pertaining to the alleged defect. The vehicles are identified by the USPS serial number and are listed on the attachments. Copies of all-known field reports, service and Leannical bulletins, studies, analyses, surveys and investigation per uning to alled dependently have all been stached.

Mr. Michael B. Brownlee May 27, 1988

Page

3. Identify and describe all accidents, subrogatior claims, or lawsuits known to AM General jectaining to the alleged defect (where AM General is or was a defendant or codefendant) Provide AM General's analysis of each item, clearly identifying the vehicle (model, model year and VIN) the vehicle owner, and any injuries or property damage which may have occurred.

AM General is not aware of any accidents, subrogation claims, or lawsuits pertaining to the alleged defect on the subject vehicle.

- Identify and describe all modifications or changes that could relate to the alleged defect in the subject vehicles. The following information must be included for each modification or change:
  - a. the reason for the modification or change;
  - a description of the modification or change;
  - the approximate calendar date on which the modification or change was incorporated into production; and
  - was incorporated into production; and d. state whether the modified or changed components could be interchanged with earlier production components.

AM General issued three modifications or changes which could relate to the alleged defect in the FJBC vehicle.

- I Steel Fuel Return Line Modification
- II Vacuum Harness Modification
- III Valve Rocker Cover Replacement

Each-of these items is addressed separately.

## I Steel Fuel Return Line Modification

a. the reason for the modification or change;

The steel fuel return line modification was introduced as an interim improvement to minimize the extent of damage which could occur if an existing fire generated sufficient heat to melt the production plastic fuel return hose, thereby spewing raw fuel throughout the engine compartment.

a description of the modification or change;

A steel tube replaced the plastic hose from the fuel filter to an area adjacent to the fuel pump.



Mr. Mithae B. Brown Ma

> c. the approximate calendar date on which the modification or thange was incorporated into production;

> > Modification was introduced after completion of the production schedule. Part supplied by AMG to USPS in March-1986.

 d. state whether the modified or changed components could be interchanged with earlier production components.

Not applicable. No earlier production components existed.

#### II Vacuum Harness Modification

a. the reason for the modification or change;

The vacuum harness was modified to prevent it from being directed through areas of the engine compartment inherently subjected to elevated temperatures sufficient to cause autosphilion of the hoses to occur. AM General Safety Campaign #87V-041 based on 6 fet, Related Defect Determination.

b. a ascription of the modification or change;

Various vacuum hose lengths were shortened and rerouted.

 the approximate calendar date on which the modification or change was incorporated into production;

This modification was also introduced after completion of the production schedule. USPS Nxd. Bulletin #VMO-05-87 issued April-1987.

 state whether the modified or changed components could be interchanged with earlier production components.

The production components are modified in accordance with the procedures described in the modification order.

#### III Valve Rocker Cover Replacement

a. the reason for the modification or change;

The service replacement valve rocker cover was provided to the USFS to Himinate rocker covers which leaked oil. This oil coul collect depressed areas of the cylinde head providing a pot nontributor to mai normal

Mr. Michae B. Brownlee May 17, 1989 Page

b. a description of the modification or change;

The production rocker cover is replaced with the different design replacement cover with minor alterations to the cylinde head.

 the approximate calendar date or which the modification or change was incorporated into production;

The replacement rocker covers were installed after completion of the production schedule.

d. state whether the modified or changed components could be interchanged with earlier production components. USFS began field retrofit in November-1987 and is expected to complete in Jume-1988.

After replacement procedures have been properly conducted, original production parts cannot be effectively installed.

Furnish the number of warranty claims related to the alleged defect on the subject vehicles by model, model year, calendar month, and problem code. Each problem claim code must be identified.

Thire have been 5 known warranty claims related to the alleged defect. All claims were made on the only model affected, namely\_the 1986 FUSC 1/2 ton delivery van. The vehicles affected are identified by their respective USFS serial numbers as follows: 3290803; 3290818; 3292703; 3293757 and 3294956.

6. Provide the name, address, and telephone number of any and all fleets, companies, private individu, 's, etc. of which AM General is aware, which purchased, leased, obtained, etc. 20 ur more of the subject vehicles. For each concern, furnish the number of vehicles broken down by model, weight rating, and model year.

United States Postal Service Office of Fleet Management L'Enfant Plaza Washington, D.C. 20260 Attn: Mr. Paul Rosenak (202) 268-3576

The vehicle information is the same as described under Item 1.

Mr. Mi hak B. Brown May

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 Furnish AM General's assessment of the alleged defect in the subject vehicles.

For the record: In spite of the AM General supplied USPS installed metal fuel line change, AMS Vacuum Hoses Safety Related Defect Campaign #87W-041 and the USPS purchased and installed valve cover § kit (which Chrysler has agreed to reimburse them for in full) Am General has not reached any definitive conclusion as to the origin or the engine compartment fires. As endered by our early modifications, our initial actions were discreted toward minimizing the extent of damage incurred by the whiche after a fire had already begun. Most evidence is generally destroyed by the fire and determining the origin is extremely difficult. However, AM General is hopeful that these changes, will in time prove, that we have either eliminated or significantly reduced these courances or that the Utinate source of these fires is determined and a final resolution is accomplished.

If we can be of any further service, please sovise.

Sincerel yours,

Donald P. Weiher

Director, Product Assurance

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# FJ8C ENGINE COMPARIMENT FIRES BY VEHICLE SERIAL NO. IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER OF INCIDENT

RYYK	1

DATE	FROM	<u>or</u>	SUBJECT
6/25/84	M. Davis	F. Masten	Shorted Out Harness causing damage to parts of emission control units
7/18/84	D. Pontek	L. Miller	FJ-8C Engine Fire S/N 3294828, Haywood, CA Ret. Pts. Rpt. #84-27
7/24/84	F. Masten	D. Caldwell	Vehicle Fire FJ-8C S/N 3294828, Haywood, CA
8/17/84	D. Pontek	R. Johnson S/N 3290251	FJ-8C Vehicle Fire,
		5/N 3230231	Birmingham, Alabama Photos
8/22/84	G. derPiliposian	R. Johnson	FJ-8C Engine Fire S/N 3290270 Portland, Maine
8/31/84	G. derPilibosian		Notes regarding call to Dave Warren
9/18/84	G. derPilibosian		Notes regarding call to F. Masten on S/N 3290754, Seattle, WA
9/28/84	A. Majurus	G. derPilibosian	Activity Report S/N 3290754—Engine Fires
3/29/95	С. М.	G. derPilibosian	Notes regarding 1/2 Ton S/N 3293757 Columbia, MD - includes photos
4/09/85	N. Wiltse	G. derPilibosian	Activity Report S/N 3290754- Under the hood fire
4/12/85	G. derPilibosian	R. Johnson	Trip Report, Columbia, MD FJBC Engine Compartment Fire (4/9/85) and Merrifield, VA, DTL/5M Brake Testing (4/20/85)

0326t:1

# FJSC ENGINE COMPARTMENT FIRES BY VEHICLE SERIAL NO. IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER OF INCIDENT

# BOOK 1

DATE	FROM	<u>10</u>	SUBJECT
5/15/85	N. Wiltse	G. derPilibosian	Field Deficiency Report S/N 3292703, Anchorage, AL - Under hood fire.
9/03/85	B. Brand	G. derPilibosian	Activity Report S/N 3291816 Bellmawr. NJ
6/26/85	G. derPilibosian		Notes regarding Engine Compartment Fire on S/N 3292955
6/28/85	N. Wiltse	G. derPilibosian	Activity Re ort S/N 3292955 Cleveland, OH Under the Hood Fire
7/15/85	A. Majerus	G. derPilibosian	Activity Report S/N 3293526 Dayton, OH
7/15/85	B. Brand	G. derPilibosian	Activity Report S/N 3291818 Pittsburgh, PA
10/07/85	P. Rosenak	G. derPilibosian	Field Deficiency Report S/N 3291504 Hartford, CT Under hood fire Includes Photos
10/14/85	G. derPilibosian		Notes regarding call to Lippmann Motors - Wiring harness
10/25/85	G. derPilibosian	R. Johnson	Trip Report, Hartford, CT FJBC Engine Cmpt. Fire Includes Photos

Page 2

0326t:2

